

VERNACULAR REGIONS AND STATE IDEOLOGIES: THE TAVRIA CASE

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Abstract. *The political, economic and geo-ecological issues of the use and current distribution in the south of Ukraine of Tavria toponymy, together with the development of an ideological component for Tavria toponymy use, are discussed in this article.*

In particular, the author speaks about the functions of Tavria toponymy use in the following three historical periods: the implementation of the so-called “Greek project” of Russian Empire; the construction of irrigation systems in the south of Ukraine under Soviet Union; the time of independent Ukraine in the frame of market economy, and specifically during the decommunization campaign. The author draws his conclusions of a significant influence of ideology on the formation of areals of vernacular regions, and of a close relationship between toponymy adopted, and the political, economic and environmental programs and activities implemented in the corresponding times. The author bases his conclusions on an analysis of: toponymy renaming in the period from XVIII to XXI centuries; a number of examples found in literature, and, in modern times, advertising sources; and in-depth interviews conducted by the author with a number of ordinary people inhabiting south Ukraine regions. The author also draws attention to the hidden ideological meaning of toponyms often referred to as politically neutral, because of their apparent appeal to nature, geography, history and economic reasons.

Keywords: *Tavria, vernacular region, toponymy, state ideology*

The full version of this article is available in Russian.

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